

WRESTLING FORUM

AUGUST 15, 1988

VOLUME III

ISSUE 15

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staff

Jon Gallagher-Editor

with

Sean Grande, Jeff Siegel, and Ed Garea

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I'M SO EXCITED!!!

Let's get the obligatory stuff out of the way first so we can talk about all the exciting stuff going on around here. Wrestling Forum is published on the 15th and 30th of each month and mailed the following day. Price per issue is \$1.50 and you can subscribe for up to twelve issues at a time.

Now onto the good stuff...THE CONVENTION IS COMING OFF IN GREAT FASHION! I'm typing this a few days before the deadline for deposits has to be in, but the response so far has been tremendous! If you miss the UAWF's first ever convention in Memphis (October 7 - 11), you're going to be kicking yourself in the butt for the next year! We have some additional information available also...there will be LATE reservations accepted...but there's a catch. Late reservations will cost \$20.00 per person more and will be accepted up until SEPTEMBER 5th! Now if you want to go, but you're not a member, you'll need to become one by the end of AUGUST. There will be no exceptions to this, so get your UAWF membership (\$15.00 per member and \$2.00 for other members of your family, each) in to UAWF, Box 215, Galesburg, IL 61402 by the end of the month. If you are not a member and you send in for convention, your convention check will be returned.

As for other stuff going on at the convention, we have issued a challenge (yet to be accepted) to Lawler's Army (the softball team). Hopefully that will take place Sunday afternoon. Also, if you are coming to convention and you have some old (or new) wrestling memorabilia just laying around that you want to get rid of, bring it along. We'll be having an auction on Saturday night (UWAF gets a 10% commission for selling the stuff). Also, if you have a display you'd like to set up for viewing (or selling) contact me for the rates (they are cheap).

Next on the agenda for Forum readers is a new contest. We are going to have a subscription drive in an attempt to get our readership up to 350. It's a long road to hoe, so we're going all out. Full details will be made available next issue, but here's the basics: Get a friend to subscribe to the Forum and in return you get some "Forumbucks". That's right, we've started our own "country" and will begin issuing our own currency. For each issue that you get a friend to subscribe for (up to twelve issues) you will receive one Forumbuck. These can be used to purchase all sorts of things from old programs to video tapes to subscriptions to yearbooks. Next issue we'll include details on how much the merchandise will cost in Forumbucks, but they will begin to be issued starting this issue. Be sure the person you get to subscribe includes your name so you can get credit. One other thing we need to tell you to make things legal, actual value of a Forum buck IS NOT \$1.00 but the actual value varies.

Finally, before getting on to the news, you'll remember last December I made a gross error in judgement by printing a letter from John Lanigan who chastised me for including personal stuff (like my family) here in the Forum. Readers jumped to my aid and became almost a lynch mob in attacking John and his letter. I learned from that experience that I should never set someone up like that as I lost a friend in John Lanigan. Although it's eight months too late, I'd like to publicly apologize to John for my treatment of him then. John and I will continue to have our differences of opinions, I will still continue to print personal stuff, but we'll be acting like adults about it. I welcome John back as a reader, and look forward to debating some of the finer points of the business with him.

Meanwhile, there's a tournament going on to crown our third Wrestling Forum champion, so let's check in with Sean Grande and see how the latest round went...

THIRD ANNUAL WRESTLING FORUM TOURNAMENT

Here are the results of the third round of our tournament:

Ted DiBiase cashed in Dick Murdoch 20-2.

Nobuhiko Takada rode past Arn Anderson 12-8 (2 draws),

Owen Hart destroyed Tito Santana 21-1.

Pat Tanaka receives a bye due to death of Bruiser Brody.

Stan Hansen pounded Bret Hart 12-9 (1 draw).

Akira Maeda flew past Tiger Mask 16-6.

Barry Windham clawed his way past Terry Taylor 14-5 (3 draws).

Randy Savage beat Rick Martel 21-1.

Eddie Gilbert shot past Brian Pillman 16-6.

Road Warrior Hawk handled Riki Choshu 16-5 (1 draw).

Tatsumi Fujinami defeated Jason the Terrible 14-5 (3 draws).

Road Warrior Animal dropped Jake Roberts 18-4.

Bobby Eaton chewed up Steve Williams 14-8.

Terry Gordy and Sting went to a 10-10 draw with 2 draws cast.

Ric Flair out classed Jerry Lawler 16-5 (1 draw).

TOURNEYFACTS: This round featured the first ever meeting in tournament history of world champions with Flair and Lawler...Owen Hart this year has a record of 74-21...For Blanchard, Takada, Tanaka, Gilbert and Animal, it's their first trip to the "Round of Sixteen"...

ROUND OF SIXTEEN

Vote for who you think will win the following match ups. The wrestler playing the heel is in CAPITAL LETTERS and seeds are listed in parenthesis.

(1) TED DiBIASE vs Nobuhiku Takada (9)

(8) Owen Hart vs PAT TANAKA (28)

STAN HANSEN vs Akira Maeda (13)

(1) Ted DiBiase vs TULLY BLANCHARD

(9) NOBUHIKU TAKADA vs (8) Owen Hart

(28) Pat Tanka vs STAN HANSEN

(13) AKIRA MAEDA vs (4) Barry Windham

(3) Randy Savage vs (19) EDDIE GILBERT

(22) ROAD WARRIOR HAWK vs Tatsumi Fujinami

Road Warrior Animal vs (10) BOBBY EATON

Ric Flair receives a bye.

TAG TEAM TOURNAMENT

Here are the results for the first round of the tag team tournament:

Midnight Express beat Footloose 22-0...Rockers (formerly Midnight) slipped by Varsity Club 12-10...Tsruta/Yatsu downed Lightening Express 16-5

(1 draw)...Bulldogs chased out Vic Steamboat/Joe Savoldi 18-2 (2 draws)

...Choshu/Saito slaughtered Golden/Fuller 18-4...Sheepherders drew Brian Pillman/Bruce Hart 10-10 (2 draws, both teams eliminated)....DiBiase/Andre

summerslammed Gordy/Simpson 16-6...Tully/Arn shutout Rice/Paul 22-0...Fantastics got past Grappler/Debeers 21-1...Rougeaus upset Tenryu/Hara

12-11 (1 draw)...Diamond/Tanaka defeated Kevin/Kerry Von Erich 16-6...

Powers of Pain demolished Southern Boys 20-1 (1 draw)...R & R Express rocked Samoan Swat Team 16-6...Fujinami/Kimura powered past Demolition

15-7...Windham/Garvin shutout Ivan/Angel 22-0...Road Warriors walked over R Santana/Haynes 22-0.

ROUND TWO

(1) Midnight Express vs (midnight) Rockers.

(9) Tsruta/Yatsu vs (8) Bulldogs.

(5) Choshu/Saito receive a bye.

(13) DiBiase/Andre vs (4) Tully/Arn

(3) Fantastics vs Rougeaus

(11) Diamond/Tanaka vs (6) Powers of Pain

(7) Rock and Roll Express vs (10) Fujinami/Kimura

(15) R Garvin/Windham vs (2) Road Warriors.

MAIL BALLOTS TO SEAN'S N E-W ADDRESS:

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DEADLINE FOR VOTES IS 9/11/99

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AMERICAN WRESTLING ASSOCIATION

In case you haven't heard, Verne has a big announcement. He can't tell us exactly what it is...yet...or so he says. Each week he comes out and says he's this close (holding up his thumb and forefinger) to signing some sort of deal, but he can't tell us just yet. I think it may be to announce Wrestlerock II on 11/6, but I'm not sure. I don't think they have announced that on television yet even though we've all known about it for about a month or so.

Then again, it could have to do with this next. You'll remember a year or so ago, the Tribune Company in Chicago was interested in purchasing the AWA. The Tribune owns the newspaper by the same name, the Chicago Cubs, and WGN radio and TV. When the deal fell through, my sources were willing to talk about it and confirm they had been talking. When I called this week after hearing the rumor, I got a "No comment" which pretty well tells me they are back talking again. If they pull it off, the plan is very interesting. They plan to hold one show per week and it will always be a TV taping. The taping will take place on a Tuesday or Wednesday and be shown the same weekend. The TV show would basically be a series, just like a sit-com or soap and that's where they would make their money from the advertising revenues. The only live shows they would do would be the TV tapings which means the plan is to give wrestlers national exposure with only one day's work per week and they would still get paid the same or more if they had worked a whole week (I wonder if my bosses would listen to this idea). The selling point to a lot of the wrestlers would be the limited travel and the time off with the same pay. They think they can sign away a lot of Titan guys as well as Crockett wrestlers.

As I type this, I'm watching the AWA on ESPN and for yet another week, there is "one small detail that needs to be worked out" before Verne can make his announcement. Verne is laughing like it's funny. Fans are laughing too, but not for the same reason he is.

They have announced that Curt Hennig has been suspended indefinitely for his actions (which was nothing more than jumping to Titan). Actually, it will come off looking alright to most fans as Curt isn't on any of the TV tapes until after SummerScam so it'll look to them like he couldn't find work right away. He's been wrestling for Titan since the day after he quit here.

Jay Strongbow Jr. is in and has already made Wahoo McDaniel an honorary Cherokee. I'm not sure I understood that either so if someone wants to explain why an Indian has to be made an honorary one, please do.

Rumor mill time...Larry Zbyszko is supposedly set to jump from Crockett to the AWA, and take the AWA title from Jerry Lawler. It was also reported that in order to get the title, Larry had to become part of the Gagne clan by marrying Verne's daughter Donna. Now Donna may be nice and all, but is a world's title like the AWA's worth having to become Verne's son in law for?

Remember Curt Hennig's indefinite suspension? He wrestled this week on ESPN against Lawler. I realize this was taped before his departure, but did they forget what they announced? Probably. Curt even won the match via DQ.

And this just in...Verne may scrap his plans for Wrestlerock II altogether. If that is his big announcement, we may get to see him on TV each week for a short eternity until he comes up with another big announcement to take its place. Maybe his daughter's wedding? Twice in one week he's come out to tell Larry Nelson he's close to making the announcement. I'm having the word "dipstick" run through my mind a lot whenever I hear this routine.

Meanwhile, Rocky Mountain Oysters continues to hurt people in the ring. He potatoed a jabber with a double knee this week. Fun guy to work with I bet.



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This issue's WAPT looks at some of the NWA wrestlers. These came from the Bash parties that were held across the country. If you don't know what these are, the NWA did a promotion in certain cities that allowed fans who held the \$50.00 ringside tickets to go to a reception with the wrestlers. More in the NWA section on this, but this report comes from three different fans who attended these in different parts of the country. Enjoy:

KEVIN SULLIVAN

Weird. Nice, but weird. He was spouting some gibberish until he figured out that I was a smart fan. Then he wanted to know where I got the information. Dave Meltzer was not one of his favorite topics. He did laugh when I mentioned "Dr. Dentyne."

ROAD WARRIOR HAWK

Very soft spoken and willing to have pictures taken with him. He was quite nice, especially to children, completely shattering all his image. Would not talk smart.

ROAD WARRIOR ANIMAL

Squeezed my hand extra hard when I called him "Joe." Seemed quite distant. Talked very little and seemed anxious to leave.

JIM CROCKETT

Acted like he was scared to death of people. Refused to acknowledge smart comments and it made me think that maybe it wasn't an act.

JIMMY GARVIN

He hammed it up for photos and was generally very nice. He more or less made a joke out of wrestling being a work without admitting it or denying it either. Precious was not there with him.

CHRIS CHAMPION

A first class jerk. He was nice at the party, but outside the arena both before and after the show, he displayed a foul mouth and a total disregard for the fans. I told him he was great and he responded by suggesting that I perform kinky acts on myself.

BOBBY FULTON

Was cordial and polite but after he found out that I subscribe to the "sheets", he went bonkers! His eyes lit up and he asked if I had any along. I said, "no" so he pumped me for information.

TOMMY ROGERS

Just the opposite. He clammed up when he heard about the bulletins. He kept giving Bobby real dirty looks.

STING

This man loves his fans. He talked very little but seemed to enjoy the attention more than any of the others. Would not talk smart, but then he wouldn't talk "dumb" (or whatever the opposite of smart is) either.

JIM ROSS

I had the feeling that if he had had more time, he would have probably talked my arm and leg off. He answered questions in almost a "smart-mark" way. Was very gracious when complimented.

KENDAL WINDHAM

He's a lot bigger than he looks on TV. A lot. He seems to be very shy, but he seems to be a little slow, too. Questions sometimes sink in, sometimes they don't. Forget trying to talk smart to him as he reacts with quizzical looks that deserve an oscar nomination.

DAVID CROCKETT

If this man ever goes out in the rain, he'll drown, that's how far he's got his nose stuck up in the air. Not pleasant, smart or otherwise. Okay if you're making him the topic of conversation though.

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE

I wanna tell ya, the rumors came flying out of here the past couple of weeks have been hot and heavy. Mainly they have come from WWF personel who have a definite case of wishful thinking. As the main story was going, Crockett had called each one of his wrestlers in and released them from their contracts. The rumor was feuled by the fact that none of the people I talk to from the NWA wanted to talk about this. I finally have been able to piece together what happened though.

Evidently, Crockett did have meetings with his wrestlers personally. He reportedly told them that he was going to try to make up the money he owed them in small amounts added to their weekly salaries. However, if they didn't trust him, or they thought they could do better on the open market, they were free to try. Most of the guys elected to stay and it paid off for the most part. The boys got their checks at the Bash in Oakland/San Francisco and though I wasn't told the exact amount that was made up to each of them, I was given to understand that they were all pretty happy about it.

Robert Gibson was one of those that wasn't happy with the arrangements and has decided to split. Ricky Morton stayed on and teamed with Brad Armstrong in the remainder of the Bash tour, but he and Robert have been a team for so long, one has to wonder if he'll stay with Crockett or go looking for work with Gibson. You also have to wonder how marketable Ricky is without Robert to Crockett.

What appears to be marketable is the Midnight Express-Horsemen feud. I'm falling off my chair when Cornette and JJ get together and as expected, Cornette is getting the best shots in verbally. They have set up the Express as the clear babyfaces here without turning them. This way, they should be able to go right back to being heels after this feud culminates, if that is the direction Dusty wants them to go. The departure of Robert Gibson has thrown a "funky-like a" monkey wrench into Dusty's plans for the summer, but this tag team feud should heat things up quite a bit.

One of the things that they are doing to set up yet another feud is borrowed from Titan's book of successful promoting. Actually, it's an old practice that I remember the AWA using back when I was growing up. Anyway, they have announced that the "rematch" between Flair and Luger has been signed and this time it has the stipulation that it won't be stopped for blood. They have yet to announce what city the match will take place in and for good reason. It will take place all over the country, but they want each and every city to think that thier city is the only place it's taking place in. That was very effective when the AWA used it back in the 60's so let's sit back and see how it does in these "modern" times.

Chris Champion is going to kill someone. Or someone is going to end up killing him. He's doing a kick now that was borrowed from the movie "Karate Kid" where he stands on one foot with his arms raised like a pelican or something, then does a leaping front kick. Trouble is, he potatoes most of the guys he tries it with. He caught a TBS jobber with it last week and a few weeks back he caught Rick Steiner with it on a TV tape. Rick didn't lay down like the TV jobber though, and responded with a clothesline that looked mighty tight to me.

Dress rehearsal time...Ivan Koloff seems to be turning babyface in his old age. They've turned him a couple of times so far at arena shows, however, no TV cameras have been present. Usually this is done to gauge the audience reaction on a dry run to see if it will go over or not. At the Bash show in Seattle, Ivan lost the fall and match for his team and Paul Jones and he got into an arguement. The arguement ended with Ivan destroying Jones. They've had some shoving matches in other cities as well.

Story time: Let's say there's a car dealer in your town who has a pretty good reputation with its repair shop. They start this major advertising blitz on TV, radio and newspapers saying that for just \$50.00, they will check your car out mechanically and give you a written report on what's wrong. There will be added incentives as well to take your car in to have them do whatever and get you to shell out you fifty bucks. Later you find out (and they really don't try to hide the fact) that for the fifty bucks, all they do is check your oil and add a quart if it's low. Now, 1) How many times will you go back to that dealer, and 2) how long do you think they will be in business, and 3) how long before the FTC steps in along with Better Business Bureaus and all sorts of other consumer groups came down very hard on them?

At the Great American Bash shows, selected cities allowed those with \$50.00 tickets to go into an area before the card and meet the wrestlers. This is the way it was advertised. However, in many locations, it was the preliminary guys who showed up rather than any stars. In Detroit, it was Brad Armstrong and Jimmy Garvin and they only stayed a short time. Now maybe Crockett did this because he knows it's more than likely that he won't be the promoter next year and he just wanted to fleece the fans in certain cities one last time. But if he or the NWA want to keep what fans they have, this is certainly not the way to treat them. The NWA is like the car dealer in the above story. Except that there will be no consumer groups or FTC involvement. There probably won't be many \$10.00 ticket buyers next time into town either.

Now just to set the record straight and let you know what kind of people work for Jim Crockett, one fan called Gary Juster, the promoter for Detroit (and most of the US) and complained. Juster wasn't aware of who showed up or what happened and he told this particular fan and his son that next time in their city, their tickets were free and they could come back and meet the wrestlers. It's nice to know that Crockett has at least one classy guy working for him. Trouble is, this was only one fan. Also, even if Gary Juster manages to put together a special card for the next trip to some of the cities the fans felt ripped off in, will the fans believe them? One taken, shame on you; twice taken, shame on me.

Also, in defense of the NWA, they made all the wrestlers appear at these pre Bash parties after this incident. Perhaps the promotion didn't know what its wrestlers were doing and who was showing up for the parties. If that's the case, that's even worse than sending down just the prelim guys.

The rumor mill started to work again tonight with the TBS show... The rumor is that everyone who wasn't on the show or wasn't mentioned has been let go. As far as I can tell, there is not truth to that. From what I had been told a week or so back, Crockett let a lot of his guys take some time off due to the hectic schedule of the Bash tour. It went about 45 days straight so that's a major amount of time with no days off. Last Saturday, they had just a skeleton crew in for the TBS taping and in fact had Chris Champion win a match and they had a jobber tag team match. I enjoyed that match, but it looked worse than a training school match. Mike Jackson, a terrific worker, tried several moves with one guy and the guy just couldn't pull them off. So why did I enjoy the match? It gives you an opportunity to see just who can work and who can't as well as it lets you see just how good the announcers are. This match proved to me once and for all that Jim Ross is a better announcer than Lance Russell. Now that I've seen them both in similar situations, Jim shows a little more knowledge and is able to fill time with it better than Lance. Lance is good; Jim's just the best.

The Norfolk paper this morning is reporting that Lex Luger beat Ric Flair there last night (8/13). It makes no mention of a title change

but then again, newspapers rarely do. In fact, unless the sports department of any given newspaper has a wrestling fan on staff (and I think there's a question on the application for employment that asks that and thereby eliminates any who might be) they rarely get the results right if in at all. Anyway, I can't see a title change taking place already, as they are just now getting the feud underway, I would guess it was a DQ or COR finish.

The Texas Outlaws are back together again, hopefully for one last time. I really liked this team, but that was when if you wanted to fly trans-Atlantic you had to talk to a guy named Lindberg. It came about officially in Detroit when Dusty teamed with Ed "the Original seventv year old Sheik" Farhat to go against Kevin Sullivan and Dick Murdoch. No one is sure what happened and in the three reports I got, just after Dusty pinned Kevin, Sheik turned on Dusty and Murdoch turned on Kevin. The result was the reuniting of the Outlaws. They didn't show tape of the incident and only showed Murdoch and Rhodes beating up some poor jobber (which should do wonders for Dusty as a babyface) on the syndicated show. I'm not sure who they have to feud with, but in their heyday, wouldn't the Road Warriors have been a good choice?

The time slot for NWA Main Event on TBS is stabilizing at 5:35 pm on Sundays (eastern...I now have my office clock set on eastern time so I can really be confused), as for a few weeks, it was harder to find than AWA on ESPN. The matches still aren't exactly main event type (Larry Zbyszko vs Kendall Windham), but the workrate isn't bad.

Remember Dennis Condrey left without much of an explanation? Lon Granhke of the Sun Times this past Friday did a nice page article on him and gave his reasons for the departure. He said that he didn't like all the travel citing incidents where he had to meet his wife at the airport to drop off his dirty clothes and get clean ones. The big thing though was that he had a deal with Titan that he claims Eaton and Cornette backed out of at the last minute. Interesting article.

Ric Flair got some unexpected publicity from CBS today during the Bears-Vikings pre season football game from Sweeden. Brad Muster, the Bears #1 draft pick was running the ball when Terry Bradshaw (color man on the broadcast) mentioned the tape on his fingers. He said that Muster tapes his fingers for the game just like his favorite wrestler Ric Flair. He made mention of the Ric Flair tee shirt Muster wears under his jersey. Bradshaw also said he had no idea who Flair was, but he was going to have to "check him out." My question is this... since Muster is wearing the tape on the fingers, does this mean he plans on blading if he gets hit hard during a game?

WPIX out of New York has given the NWA a little better time slot. They were on at 2:00 am while GLOW held a highly respected time slot of noon, right after Titan. GLOW & the NWA have switched places, so that will help any further attempts to promote in the New York area. Also, those of you on the Cable TV systems that carry PIX will get the show at a decent time.

Jim Cornette solved a long standing mystery for us all. How many times have you asked yourself where you know Tully Blanchard from? He reminds me of someone, I just can't remember who. Jim answered it this week on the syndicated show: Eddie Munster. Of course!

Sore subject department: I asked one of my sources if Doc was still with them. Evidently not. Of course you never know with him as he tends to exaggerate a little. According to him, he is supposed to be the guest on Brother Love's segment form the PPV event. We should know for sure by next issue (well of course we will, dummy, the PPV will be history by then).

CRITIQUE

I am enjoying my subscription to the Forum, although there are some criticisms that I would like to share. First, I don't see why you have a Calgary report. It basically tells us nothing. At times the report is incoherent and I think you, as editor, should correct that. Add to the report where you can. Expand on some of the ideas and angles. A one sentence report just doesn't get the effect across. I would like to be able to understand what's going on there, but I just can't follow it. The other problem I have is with the Global report. I think you could print the same report three or four times in a row and no one would notice. You want to talk about the NWA being stale? If we start talking stale and start with this promotion, we'll never get to the NWA. Jeff Bowdren seems to be a talented writer, but the poor guy never has anything new to work with. Assign him to something more worthwhile.

Also, I can tell through your writings who your favorites are and who you hate. It shows. I can almost tell which wrestlers subscribe and who doesn't by the way you write about them (reader goes on to list who he thinks are subscribers...and he's 90% right).

The only other thing that I would change would be your constant search for the right punch line. Sometimes you go a bit over board on your humor, almost to the point of consciously looking for something funny to write about. Humor is important, and I don't wish to see you cut it out completely, but try to be a better judge of when and where to use it.

I didn't write this letter to drag you or anyone else over the coals. I want to see you improve and continue to get better and better. I've subscribed for about a year now, and it does improve each issue. If I would have just sent for a sample issue, I probably wouldn't have continued, but I went for a three month period and got used to you and your views. One thing you should ask yourself before you send out each issue: "Would I enjoy receiving and reading this publication?"

-WALT TERRIGO-

-Baltimore, MD-

You've been watching too much wrestling. Twice in the last issue you left readers hanging telling us that you had something YOU knew, but you couldn't tell us. When you do that I feel like you're saying, "Ha-Ha, I know something you don't!" Why do you do this? If you have the situation crop up, I'd rather you give partial details (like you did with Brody's death) then fill in the details next time. Teasing us sounds too much like the promotions you write about. Please stop.

-NAME WITHHELD-

EDITOR: I honestly didn't realize how frustrating that practice must have been to readers. I guess it was a little showboating on my part, but not to the fans, but rather to let the Promotions know that I know. The practice will stop as this is just one of about six letters I got on the subject.

BRODY

Like you, I was never a big Bruiser Brody fan. It wasn't until I started getting Wrestling Forum that I started to understand what he was all about and your memorial issue confirmed what I had been suspecting. I would see him in this area working for the smallest of independents. I never understood how an international star could do this and make money. Evidently he found something that was more important than money: friendship with promoters. I've seen Brody work in front of 113 fans and give it his all. I knew he wasn't/couldn't be making much money with such a small promotion and often wondered why he didn't go to Titan or Crockett. Now I understand.

-DAVE SHEPHERD-

-Springfield, IL-

BROTHER LOVE

I had counted on you awarding your Dipstick of the Month Award to Brother Love as soon as you got a look at him. I know he doesn't actually say he's a TV preacher, but the fact is, he implies just that with the character. I think that since he is on a national scale whereas Brother Ernest Angel was just on a regional basis in Memphis, Tom Pritchard deserves the DOM more than Ernest ever did.

Also, I wonder what Titan does if the Hogan movie bombs. Do they can Hogan as that will probably destroy his career? Do they just cut him back to a minor role? The movie is one of those things that is a big gamble... they're betting the ranch on the big guy again.

-ERIC HOYME-

-Indianapolis, IN-

BALLOON PAYMENTS

Crockett's wrestlers are in a tight spot. If they leave Crockett because they didn't get thier balloon payment, they'll never get it and thus lose a bunch of money. They might also never get the chance to work for Titan ever again if they pass up this opportunity. For those who aren't good enough for Titan (and isn't that a scary thought) there's no where for them to go for work unless they want to get a job at the Local McDonalds to make ends meet. Crockett has his wrestlers right where he wants them...in his hip pocket (where his billfold certainly isn't located).

-NAME WITHHELD-

-Somewhere in North Carolina-

TRADING TAPES

I have a couple of questions concerning tape trading and selling...Is it legal? What are the penalties if it isn't? Please let me know.

EDITOR: Trading tapes falls into a grey area. Selling copyrighted material is definitely illegal, but it's very hard to catch. Penalties are vague, but can carry a prison term if it is being done in large quantities. For example if you record a PPV event and sell it to several people, the owner of the show can make life miserable for you. Best be safe and trade tapes when possible. There are those who make their living doing nothing but selling bootlegged wrestling tapes. Those people are living dangerously.

MEMPHIS

Again, this promotion for this report is the Robert Fuller show. See previous reports if you want to save time.

Bruno actually got to wrestle on TV during the past couple of weeks. He took on midget Karate Kid. Strictly comedy, and not very good comedy at that. They did all the midget routines except that Bruno looked like he was going to have permanent curvature of the spine due to bending over so much. The end of the match came with Kid coming off the top ropes and hitting Bruno with a dropkick. When he went for the pin, Sylvia hit the ring and pulled the little guy off. Robert Fuller came in and gave the midget a piledriver after that. Fuller just has to involve himself in everything I guess. The funniest part was Phil Hickerson's interview that came up a few minutes later when he came out very solemn and talked about the two midgets they killed and then dedicated a song to them....Randy Newman's "Short People" naturally.

Other than that, the Bunkhouse/Brickhouse Brown angle continues with them making racial slurs then quickly apologizing for them. They even brought out a watermelon for him as a present. I'm not quite sure how I stand on this. If a person who is being slurred (whether black, Polish, Irish or newsletter editor) goes along with it and is having fun, then I've always considered it okay. But if the person being slurred is upset by the remarks or he is being forced to go along with it, then it's pretty low class. I don't know what the situation here is.

Tommy Gilbert is in a mini feud with Gary Young. This one shouldn't last too long. Tommy recently went against Hickerson for the belt on TV and Hickerson used his patented chain to KO Gilbert for the pin. The Young Gilbert feud is a take off of the old student-teacher feud that doesn't seem to work anymore.

Jerry Jarrett did another interview threatening the Fuller Stable, but it wasn't nearly as effective as the previous one with the tears. Still, it had some impact. Jarrett proves that to be a good interview, you don't have to come out and rant and rave about what you're going to do to your opponent. Talking calmly and quietly works too and sounds more like someone making promises rather than a maniac who might not be able to back up what he says. Trouble is, I think that the first one was so effective the succeeding ones may lose meaning.

AWA related stuff...Jerry Lawler was asked to drop the belt to Greg Gagne. As soon as he stopped laughing, I guess he told them what they could do with that suggestion. He did, however agree to drop it to Larry Zbyszko, providing all the heels beat him up first. That's where the AWA title situation stands at this point. It was thought a while back that Eddie Gilbert might be the likely choice for champ, but that takes the belt further away from Minneapolis than it is now and Verne has trouble sleeping at night unless he knows right where it is.

When we asked the convention for Memphis, it was the hottest thing going. Needless to say, things have cooled off a lot, but they assure me that they will heat things up again for us when we get there. As Marty Miller used to say, "We shall see what we shall see."

CONTINENTAL WRESTLING FEDERATION

For the past few months, Continental has been quickly becoming the hottest wrestling promotion in the US. They just made a giant step towards retaining that position for a long time to come.

The first thing involves the USA promotion out of Knoxville, TN. They broke off from the Continental group some months ago taking the northern half of the territory. We had originally thought this would be the death of the southern half, mainly because it was the northern half that was drawing the crowds and the southern half was dying night after night. Eddie Gilbert was brought in as booker and proved that he is the best booker in the business today by getting people over that no one else could, popping good size crowds, making the TV show interesting, landing a national contract with FNN and basically making the show fun to watch. Now, Ron Fuller of the USA promotion has sold his group to David Woods who owns Continental which nearly doubles the size of Continental. Continental is in great shape now as not only did they have to expand the southern half of the market, they had to broaden their base to include towns in Louisiana that they didn't have before. The result is a powerful block of the country with Eddie Gilbert in charge.

As for the USA wrestlers, many will work for Continental and some will test the market elsewhere. The sale was just announced this last week, so the futures of most have not been decided yet.

One of the wrestlers that Gilbert has managed to put over that no one else could is Pez "Willie B Hert" Whatley. No one would take to this guy anywhere else, but somehow Gilbert did. One thing that helped was a recent interview where Willie was out with his son. Dangerously and Gilbert came out to torment him and they ended up beating up the fourteen year old kid (I've not seen this yet, but I've been told that the kid did a great job). The feud continues hotter and heavier with crowds actually trying to get in on the action. Gilbert and Dangerously had a match with Willie and Austin Idol where Dangerously was replaced by Nightmare Freddy (Doug Gilbert doing a Friday the 13th gimmick) due to an injury. The end was a near riot with Dangerously hitting the ref with the phone, and stealing his shirt. He counts the fall and all hell breaks loose. Ken Wayne came to ringside and kept Idol busy, handcuffing him to the ropes while Gilbert and Paul try to break Willie's leg. The fans started charging the ring.

There has been some stuff going on between Eddie and Missy as of late as well. It started with Missy seconding Tom Pritchard in his matches against Dirty White Boy Tony Anthony. Missy was more or less a last minute fill in as the woman they had originally signed for the spot had some problems with conflicting dates. Gilbert liked the idea, and he and Missy started doing some on the air arguing over trivial things including her seconding of Pritchard. I seriously doubt if they will ever turn Missy a complete babyface (since it's so out of character for her) but the lead up to what the fans expect is sure entertaining.

I'm told that this group tried to book the Road to Birmingham tournament finals on the same weekend as the UAWF convention in Memphis so that we could drive down for it too. Unfortunately, the building was not available and the tournament will take place the weekend before. They did not contact me to offer it as part of the package and I was told about it third hand. Nice to be included in my own plans, huh? Anyway, if anyone would like to see action in Continental, it's only a 246 mile drive...one way.

FNN will start carrying the CWF again in September after pushing the date back due to other commitments. Also, Mike Gunter informs me that Home Team Sports, a local cable sports channel on the mid atlantic coast, will begin carrying the show in the next few weeks. Good news, for those on the east coast and those with dishes.

THE THIRD FALL

You may have heard of Bobby Davis at one time or another. Recently he appeared on Entertainment Tonight, talking about the death of Adrian Adonis. The cryon listed him as Adrian's trainer.

Bobby does indeed train wrestlers today. But he began his career as a manager in the old WWWF. And what happened between the two jobs is the outcome of this third fall.

Bobby was an excellent manager. Many people today compare him favorably with the likes of Jim Cornette, going as far to say that Cornette stole the whole routine he does from Davis. That is not true as Cornette had never seen Davis in action. But that should give you some idea of just how good Davis was.

Davis managed Buddy Rogers while he was in the WWWF. This was in the early days of the promotion under the strict hand of Vince McMahon Sr. For some unknown reason, McMahon and Davis never really got along, although Davis was a definite boost to the gates of the day. Since this was in the early days of managers (1960's), perhaps the elder McMahon really didn't fully realize the importance of a good mouthpiece on interviews for those wrestlers who have trouble putting together sentences.

Whatever the reason, McMahon fired Davis while Davis was at the top of his career.

Wrestling in those days was a lot different from what it is today. When a wrestler was fired from one area, he could quickly move on to another. Promoters worked together at the time and it would have been easy for Davis to be blackballed from the sport. That was not the case.

Davis enjoyed living in the northeast and he really didn't want to move. He had soured on wrestling due to his experiences with McMahon, so he just dropped out of sight in the wrestling business and got into another line of work. He started cooking hamburgers.

He opened a small restaurant where he made his special hamburgers. It took a while before business took off and it was still a little early for mass franchises like a McDonalds or a White Castle, so he was content to make his hamburgers in a small market.

It was the mid seventies before his idea and his hamburgers gained national attention. Now, his hamburger stands dot the country like measles on a child. he has since sold his company and trains wrestlers.

Now you may not have heard of Bobby Davis before. He didn't name his restaurants after himself. He named them after his daughter. Her name was Wendy.

So next time you pull into one of the restaurants bearing his daughter's name, remember, it might not have been possible unless Vince McMahon Sr. had not fired this young manager. You'll know, because now you know the outcome of the third fall.

THE SMART SET - In the postmodern era of professional wrestling (after 1984), a new breed of wrestling fan has hit the scene. This animal, known as the "smart fan", is unlike any predecessors in that this fan is a complete product of the video/cable revolution. The smart fan is more fortunate than his or her predecessors in that there is more information available to process: detailed bulletins, video tapes from just about every promotion, and the explosion of wrestling on cable TV. What this has done is open up the sport of professional wrestling to such a degree that the doors may never again be closed and the sport will be unable to return to its "carny" roots.

However, as to the proposition that the smart fan, being the latest in fan evolution, is actually an improvement on all predecessors, I must answer in the negative. The smart fan is in actuality no different from other wrestling fans of past and present; the only difference is that the smart fan thinks himself or herself better than the other fans, for the smart fan actually believes that he or she knows something about the inside of the sport. There are indeed characteristics that distinguish the smart fan from other fans:

- a) Frequently calls wrestlers by their real names and then can't understand why that wrestler becomes hostile.
- b) Can't understand why the wrestling promoters and the wrestlers themselves don't know as much about the game as the smart fan.
- c) Has a memory that can't stretch back beyond 1975.
- d) Is extremely receptive to hi-tech video and loves gimmicks, no matter how outrageous. Witness the large support for the WWF that I've been seeing from smart fans as of late.

The smart fan, for all of his or her sophistication, wouldn't know the concept of "working" if it hit them square in the head. Witness the late 1986 bout between Curt Hennig and Nick Bockwinkel for the AWA belt. The match was fascinating in that both wrestlers worked the mat well; there were few rest holds and the mat was used to gain advantage and momentum. I had not seen a match like it in years and was extremely impressed, for most wrestlers today regard the mat as anathema. But the smart fans by and large, from the letters I saw to the bulletins, were not impressed by this fine display. What did impress the smart fans was the pre-Wrestlemania IV abortion wherein Hogan lost his belt to Andre by means of an "evil twin referee". When I saw this bout, I was disgusted, but from the mail I saw, the smarts thought this was the greatest idea they had seen. To me, it was something right out of Saturday morning cartoons, but then the smart fan is basically a child of the Saturday morning cartoon; that is why the gimmick went over so well.

Another thing I have noticed about this breed is its almost total smartiness. If Dave Meltzer or Jon Gallagher say that a wrestler is the greatest they have seen yet, the mail coming in will reflect that viewpoint. Case in point is Owen Hart: I thought he was a great rookie, way better than Bam Bam Bigelow, his main competition for Rookie of the Year, but having seen Owen lately, I notice that he is great on the flash and dash moves, but extremely weak on mat work. Of course, this comes with experience, if at all. But the fact that Dave Meltzer gave him a favorable rating in his opinion was enough to sway many of the smarts into thinking that Hart is the greatest thing since sliced bread. Don't misinterpret what I am saying: I am not attacking Meltzer or Gallagher. They only report the news and offer commentary. But they should not be opinion makers, nor do they really try to be: they just give an opinion. It is not their fault that thousands take this

opinion to be fact, but just another facet of the smart fan.

Now if there is anything the smart fan despises short of a gimmickless performance, it is the dreaded "mark". The mark is seen by the smart fan as just one short evolutionary step ahead of the monkey. The mark

is an efficient scapegoat, in that he serves as someone the smart fan can truly look down upon and impress with his vast array of wrestling inside knowledge. But the mark, like the smart fan, is vastly overrated. Doubtless to be sure, there are indeed some true believers, but I find in the main that the average casual fan knows wrestling to be a work, but doesn't know how it is worked. For that matter, neither does the smart fan. Oh, he or she may think they know how it is worked, but in reality this is sheer guesswork. Wrestling is still a closed enterprise. I have been a fan since the age of eight years old, and I still don't know how it is really worked. For that matter, neither do even some of the wrestlers. I strongly believe that some of the wrestlers are the biggest marks in the business. For instance, after Wrestlemania III, I was told by people who should really know better that Hulk and Andre each received \$750,000 for their performance. Really. But while the wrestler is often in the dark as to the promoter's intentions, he still knows how the actual wrestling itself is worked and is not about to share it with outsiders; and like it or not, we fans are looked upon as outsiders, no matter how "smart" we wish to appear. I often compare the smart fans to the character Tyrone Power played in the film "Nightmare Alley". Power played a con man who was interested in the mentalist code that Joan Blondell and her partner used. Power revealed his reasons as wanting to know more than the average boob out there and basking in the power of having that knowledge. Sounds like your average smart fan to me. 15

Now lest I be accused of lumping everyone in as a smart fan, let me make an important distinction: I generally dislike the terms "smart fan" and "mark". I prefer the terms "serious fan" and "casual fan". To my way of thinking, most smart fans are not serious fans. A serious fan is someone who really takes an interest in the sport, its history and its miscellany. A smart fan to me is a casual fan who can expound only on the superficialities of the sport. A serious fan also loves the sport of wrestling itself and often is an avid amateur wrestling fan. A casual fan cares little about the actual wrestling and goes rather for the personalities and gimmickry of the show. The main thing I look forward to in the Summer Olympics is the wrestling, both Greco-Roman (which there is scant coverage of) and freestyle, and also the judo competition. The sad thing is that, in the past, one could view these competitions with an eye to future professional wrestlers; now it is only true of the Japanese competitors. This is one of the things I decry about the current wrestling scene: as those who enter are less trained in the basics of wrestling, the quality of the sport is bound to decline. Witness such things as steroid musclemen whose "annihilation" only move is the clothesline, and also witness the advent of "annihilation" matches. Moves which used to be patent finishers, such as the atomic drop and the abdominal stretch now become harmless moves or rest holds. The irony is most apparent in the case of Greg Valentine, whose figure-four leglock used to be so feared that whole feuds were built around its presence. Now, because so many wrestlers have easily escaped its clutches, the perception is that it is not as deadly as it used to be. So, a leg pad has been added to give it the extra force the promoters have removed over the years. Now, without the pad, the figure-four leglock is just another harmless rest hold applied during the course of the match. Jon once told me of a match in the Crockett promotions where every hold in the book was used to no avail, but J.J. Dillon later won the match for his charge (I believe it was Tully Blanchard) by hitting the opponent with his shoe. As Jon remarked to me, that must've been some shoe.

At least there is hope for me and people like me: the readvent of the U.W.F. in Japan, where mat work is stressed and an arm bar can be a submission hold. At least it will easily beat what passes for wrestling in these parts. I mean, what Ric Flair does is not wrestling, it is choreography. He takes the same over-the-shoulder bump in every match; Flair is capable of better, but either his opponents are not up to snuff or the matchmaker is a dull fellow (I believe it to be a combination of both). You smart fans can keep your gimmicky acrobatic performers, give me wrestlers anytime.

FLORIDA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING
BY CHUCK SHEPHERD

Gordon Solie's four-month-old effort to keep Florida's semi-psychopathic wrestling fans satisfied weekly failed a bellweather test in Tampa of July 30 in the Second Annual Eddie Graham Memorial card. Last year's, in St. Petersburg before the Crockett buyout of the old Eddie Graham company, was said to have drawn a full (five-figure) house, but this one drew 1,500 in a less-auspicious building with ringside tickets raised from \$7 to \$20.

The only nationally known talent here consists of Brett Sawyer, WWF-caricature Dick Slater, and future trivia answer Danny Spivey, plus Solie's partners Mike Graham and Steve Keirn. Imports for this card included Kerry Von Erich vs. Jerry Lawler on top of what was messily overbilled as a title unification match ("second ever," then "first ever in Florida"), Diamond and Tanaka, the Nasty Boys, and Eric Embry, with probably only Von Erich drawing a single extra fan (since WCCW has long played here over the air).

Though the workrate was gene rally good, there was much dissatisfaction with the card at ringside. No titles, of course, changed hands, and the screw-job finishes for the local heroes backfired badly. The results: Von Erich beat Lawler by DQ. Diamond-Tanaka beat Graham-Keirn (bad top-ropes DQ after an unannounced second-ref quick-count a win by Graham-Keirn) Embry beat Lou Perez (After Embry got pinned with the ropes, he somehow was goaded back into the ring, where Perez pinned him in about ten seconds) Spivey beat Slater by COR (Spivey nevertheless was awarded the vacant Florida title last held by Mike Rotunda) Star Riders beat Nasty Boys by DQ Denny Brown beat Frankie Lancaster (Brown retains his "junior heavyweight title," using brass knucks) Sawyer-Mark Starr-Robbie Idol beat Scotty the Body-Bad Bob-Jim Backlund (in the only clean face win all night and one of the two face wins by any means) Scotty drew Rex King Johnny Ace beat Lazertron (using the ropes; Hector works without the mask for cross-state rival Global Wrestling) (Graham, Slater, and Embry juiced)

The local talent here ranges from green to green, from the comically inept Rex King and Scotty the Body to the comically good Jim Backlund and Star Riders' valet Luna, who are the area's best heat-getters. Backlund on this night hid under the ring to give Denny Brown his brass knucks, then was trapped there by irate fans, escaping only when Solie turned their attention away with a charity interview. Best developing talents are jobber Bad Bob, who does the best fall-through-the-ropes since Barry Windham (but who has about half the charisma of Howard Finkel), and the high-flying Frankie Lancaster. Sixteen of the 25 wrestlers on the card hail from within a 25-mile radius of Tampa.

Compared to Bob Roop's Global Wrestling Alliance, this effort is classic, Hiro Matsuda-trained, Florida wrestling. Most guys do good suplexes and fall to the mat when punched (rather than just stagger). Global is WWF-without-the-glitz: elaborate angles not carried to completion, unbelievable caricatures (Professor" Malenko, in his late 50s kayoing hands-of-stone-style Jumbo Baretta and Rusty Brooks), and Okerlund-type insider jabs on interviews.

Florida Championship Wrestling will go as far as its principal assets, which is Gordon Solie's creditability, takes it. There is much underused talent around, as Solie proved by bringing in Sonny King to manage. To open the card, King brought forth a masterpiece: an awesome, ten-minute stall on the issue of why he wasn't notified of the schedule of referees for the evening. For a crew that will have to make mountains out of molehills to succeed, that was the textbook example of how to do it.

WINDY CITY WRESTLING

Sam DiCero must be wondering if he's living wrong or something. Windy City put on their second Amphitheatre show this past Friday night August 12, before an estimated 850-1000 fans. Murphy's law tried its best to catch up to Sam, but he fended off each problem and made do with what he had.

The first problem was with the main event of the evening. Bruiser Brody had been scheduled so Sam had less than a month to come up with a replacement for him in his match with Nord the Barbarian. Sam came up with Abdullah the Butcher which, while not quite in the same league as Brody, made the main even interesting enough. This past week however, Nord was hospitalized (legit) over what was termed as severe depression over the death of his friend Brody. Sam had to come up with a replacement main event with only about 24 hours notice. What Chicagoans saw was Abby in basically a squash against rookie Frank the Tank Melson.

The match only went about six minutes and it should have been ended sooner. Frank was a mess after his first blade job as he cut himself a little too deep. Add that to Abby's famous fork and what resulted was what was described to me as the "goriest bloodbath in Amphitheatre history." That covers a lot of ground. Just to give you an idea of how serious it was, Frank was taken to a local hospital and observers noted that he may have legitimately been in shock. After the match, Abby proceeded to destroy ringside, beating up several other wrestlers, a TV camera, a Japanese photographer, and TV announcer Allan Eppenstein. Some of the aftermath was ad lib on Abby's part which had some of the Windy City people a little concerned.

Other notes on the card include honoring Moose Cholak (possibly the World's worst wrestler) for his years of service at the Amphitheatre and also, Chicago Sun Times columnist Lon Grahne was honored for his weekly column devoted to wrestling. Two waterbeds, courtesy of Pepper's were given away. The card was taped for TV.

The biggest news out of here came from Sam DiCero. He announced to the crowd that they had signed a contract with channel 50 out of Chicago and will also start in the next week or so on channel 23 in Minneapolis.

TV has been the biggest stumbling block for this group. Very honestly, I don't think that any other group would have survived so long without a TV base. DiCero has had the stubborn sticktoitiveness that all successful people have. Advertising for this show left a lot to be desired, though they did the best they could. They tried to advertise the show during other wrestling broadcasts in Chicago, but both the WWF and World Class made sure that didn't happen. They had to rely on word of mouth, and Lon Grahne's column. DiCero and Eppenstein appeared on the Wally Phillips show on WGN radio, but then again, you have to wonder how much of wally's audience are wrestling fans (Chicago readers will understand...Phillips caters to the over 40 affluent audience). Look for big things and rapid expansion after they hit the tube. Next show is scheduled at the Amphitheatre for September 30.

A team to watch from here is the Tokyo Bullets (I still say they should be named the Sicilian Bullets). This masked tag team impressed me a bunch in Dixon a few months back and they had a lot of our readers gasping at this show. They are small and have been used mainly as a jobber tag team, but they've got the talent to go somewhere.

In another bloodbath the Terminators (who must love playing the face role) won by DQ over the original Midnight Express with Paul E. One report questioned how they are ever going to get this one and the Abby-Melson matches on TV without censorship.

And finally, Bam Bam Bigelow won a battle royal that featured everyone who had wrestled on the card. Bam Bam himself did not work a singles match.

GLOBAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE

by Jeff Bowdren

As stated in our last report from Global, lead heel Rusty Brooks was terminated by President Mike Brannon (red Roberts) and Vice President Bob Roop. Along with Brooks, Boris and Joe Malenko were also let go although Boris has returned to teach at the GWA academy.

Here's what I find hard to fathom about both moves: At the last set of tapings, Rusty was put over even bigger than he had been before. He, Hector Guererro and Tom Nash formed the "Rat Pack" (yet another Bill Watts idea gets stolen) and were made out as the lead heel group. They were certainly the only ones getting any heel reactions from the crowd, as Death Row usually got cheered at the tapings (convicted fleons being cheered. Says something about life in South Florida, huh? Now you know why I'm moving) and Red Roberts gets heat usually because he's with "the Vietnamese" guys. I really can't see anyone buying a ticket to boo Red Roberts. Brooks on the other hand was the kind of heel that you love to hate. Just by saying "Why don't you shut your mouth!", he always got a pop at the tapings, and of course there were the inevitable cries of "Pooooorrr-ky". Some speculation on why Rusty was let go: Rusty was a teacher at the GWA school and used to run spot shows using the students from the school on the card. Rusty used to give the students a stack of tickets and let them know that the only way they would get paid was if they sold their allotment of tickets. Through cards like this, Rusty was actually doing better than the GWA itself. That had to perturb Brooks and Roop just a tad, along with the fact that Rusty was known to openly question booking decisions, thereby getting the reputation of a troublemaker with the group.

In Malenko's case, he was given the jr. heavyweight strap in a match with Hector. What is the point of giving someone a strap and then letting them go the next day. Maybe Joe was too talented to work here. He still waiting for the return call from Giant Baba but if he doesn't get it soon, don't be surprised to see him with Akira Maeda's UWF by Christmas time.

As for Global, it looks even more of the Red Roberts show than before.

Bugsy McGraw is now in. I'll try to control my emotions. Roberts and Bugsy had a match last week where the stip was the loser had to eat a cockroach. No I'm not joking.

Tom Nash looks to be ready for a big push now that Brooks is gone. Nash and Jumbo Baretta had a match in Hollywood, Florida on 8/13/88 that was said to be quite good, with brawling all over the building.

EDITOR'S NOTES:

Jeff will be moving to Mississippi in the next couple of weeks. Anyone in Southern Florida who would like to take over this report, or at least report to me on it is welcome to try. Jeff also wanted me to mention that for those who sent for his tape list to be patient. The moving is taking a lot of his time. If you sent for it and you didn't send money, send him \$2.00 for postage and stuff. Most of the time when we advertise a tape list for someone, they aren't doing it to make money, they just want to trade and increase their own library of tapes. These lists cost money to print or photocopy and to mail. Most individuals can't handle the cost of sending out 30 lists to people who request them without getting helped out with the postage. So whenever we list a list, be sure to send some bucks along to handle the postage and stuff.

I'm back to doing my own reports from here now as the regular report didn't come in. Trent Walters, who used to do this report has decided to start his own bulletin. My thanks to several readers up in Canada who are sending bits and pieces concerning Stampede.

Jason the Terrible came back from his tour of Japan and agreed to work a few dates in major cities around the territory. He and Stu couldn't come to terms for a full time thing as Jason also has reportedly gotten another offer here in the States. I've been told that he has been offered the role of a second Russian in the NWA and that he is considering the offer and that was part of the reason Hart wouldn't offer him anymore than he did and also why Jason wasn't willing to make a full time commitment at this point.

They did tape an angle with him though that will be running in the major cities until he makes a final decision in which he made the save for Bad Company in a tag match against Great Gama and Makhan Singh. Johnny Smith was also involved on the heels side, but the angle was done to set a series of matches with Jason and Singh.

Stampede runs regular Friday night shows in Calgary, but Titan came in and booked the city away from them on Friday, so the Harts will present a Calgary card on a Thursday night instead of going head to head. Strange...a few months ago, Titan and Calgary worked together for the most part with Stampede actually announcing shows in the area for Titan. Titan in return allowed Bret Hart and Davey Boy Smith to appear on Stampede shows. After Titan managed to sign away Owen Hart, though, all of this seems to have stopped.

No one here is quite sure who the booker is for the group. Keith Hart claims to be and does in fact handle

the book in Calgary. However, he doesn't make the road trips with the group so Bruce Hart takes over the decision making on the road. Since they're family, the friction that would be expected from this sort of arrangement isn't as apparent, although there is bound to be some.

Steve DiSalvo is turning babyface to the surprise of almost no one. The angle has been coming for several weeks now and although, no one has described it to me, fans in the area have been expecting it for some time now.

Brian Pillman is out again with the same nagging torn tricept. He torn the muscle in early June and has tried a couple of comebacks before he was completely healed and as a result did more damage. I'm told he'll return home to the States to seek treatment.

Again, I'd like to thank all our Canadian readers for helping out with this report. We'll try to be a little more current with reports as we are going to be using the telephone with the reports a lot more now than we did when we depended on the mail disservice to get them back and forth.

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION

I guess (yawn), I will be ordering SummerScam 88 on Pay Per View (ho-hum) and watching it when I get home from work on the 29th (yawn). So please, no phone calls that night, okay? Unless something happens so important that it just can't wait.

All of the hype is being directed at the PPV show so there's very little to report (even with TV tapings that were held this past week) other than about the show. We'll try though.

I'm not going to list the matches again as I did last issue, but if you take a close look, there is really no mystery as to who is going to win all of the preliminary bouts. The only two matches where there is a question is the HTM-Beefcake thing and the tag match. The Inter-continental title match is less of a mystery after the TV taping this past week (we'll get to that in a minute). The tag match will be interesting only because of Jesse. Something tells me there will be a turn during the match (not Hogan) and I look for it to be Virgil if there is. I haven't been paying close enough attention to the TV show as of late to base that feeling on anything concrete, so whether it happens or not, just credit that to one of my incoherent ramblings.

From the TV tapings this past week in Dayton, OH & Wheeling WV, we have basically the feuds being set up that will carry us into the fall and winter seasons. First off, HTM looks like he will retain his IC championship at SuperScam (again, a guess, but I would think he will not retain his hair). At the latest tapes, he came to the ring (the third hour) challenged anyone to come out and take his IC belt. Ultimate Dingbat came out and destroyed HTM and took the belt, leaving HTM for dead. HTM was carried from the ring. Later, Craig DeGeorge had an interview spot with Dingbat and he told Honky that if he wanted the belt, to come and get it. Jimmy Hart comes out to confront him and Honky sneaks up from behind and delivers an earful of guitar.

And if you think this feud sounds dreadful, listen to this one: Brutus won't have anyone to work with so they've set him up with on by letting him give Betsy (Ron Bass' whip) a "haircut." He comes out to make the save for a TV jobber when Bass is raking the kid with his spurs after a match. He cuts up the whip, then parades around in Bass' cowboy hat. In the next hour, Bass attacks Beefy during a TV squash, and Beefy juices after a bout with Bass' spurs. I'm told the skit was well done, but will it sell tickets? Not to me it won't.

They're pushing the fact that Brother Love's segment from the PPV show will feature a guest that has never been in the WWF before. Hmmm. Curt Hennig? A Crockett defector? All I know is that Titan people are telling me they have a major announcement that will shock everyone. That's a song I've heard before, but it also is coming from several different Titan sources. I personally think the story is a plant because if that may peopole knew about it, so would I. When Titan wants a secret kept, they keep it.

I thought I was going to stain my living room rug again. I saw a Savage squash this week that had Hogan and Liz at ringside. Afterwards we got the usual posing, but it was LIZ cupping her hand to her ear to coax the cheers from the fans. Barf! She looked like she was enjoying it though

The Rougeau brothers are continuing to entertain me. They are now announcing themselves as "from montreal, soon to relocate in the United States." Their interviews with the little flags waving continue to be great, er ah, Fabulous.

They did a tremendous business in Milwaukee for Hogan's return on 7/30 with around 28,000. Crocket came in with a Bash the next night and only drew around 4000. I believe we'll have the Milwaukee results in the results section.

Drug testing for all wrestling personnel, announcers, ring attendants and janitors was held this past Friday the 12th. No word on the results but if you don't see some major names around over the next few weeks, you can guess why. The tests are random, but a pattern is developing to their schedule as usually its within 10 days of a TV taping. That way, if someone major is caught, they get their suspension without missing another set of tapes, or they miss one set and are back before anyone notices. In the usual brand of WWF hypocrisy, pot and steroids are allowable, they are only checking for speed and coke (basically).

In an unrelated subject, the Iron Sheik is history again. He was fired before the testing for missing a couple of dates. That doesn't sound like the punishment fit the crime, but that was the deal they made with him...miss work, you're gone.

About the most common rumor this weekend has been who Brother Love's guest on the PPV event will be. Most of the calls swear that it will be Steve Dr. Death Williams. Does that make sense? Putting a guy on a PPV interview spot who can't remember his own name? Well, then again, we look at the undercard, scratch our heads, and figure that since whoever put it together must have been smoking Drano himself, the Doc rumor doesn't seem that far out of context.

Also, if the rumor mill is correct, we can expect to see Terry Gordy in sometime in October and Stan Hansen returning in about December. The story behind Hansen is that he doesn't want to end up like Brody, being a nomad with no set schedule. We'll see.

Hogan's movie has a release date for the spring which would coincide with Wrestlemania V. There are two theories about him winning the title back. One has him winning it at WMV so that it will pop a good crowd at the theatres. The other one (as ridiculous as it sounds) has Savage dropping the title at WMV to whoever Hogan wrestles in the movie. After the movie is released Hogan wins the title IN THE MOVIE. Yeah, I laughed too, but see paragraph 3 lines 4-6 of this page for a better explanation. Smart money, though, is on the former.

Jimmy Hart is trying to sabotage the Hart Foundation by being in Demolition's corner at SummerScam. That could be interesting.

Even more interesting is an announcement they'll be making in the next week or so revealing Hogan and Savage's secret weapon for the tag match at Scam. Elizabeth will be in their corner, but under her dress she'll be wearing a string bikini. Well, that confirms that \$15.95 of my hard earned money just got spent.

We hear about the big crowds all the time, but usually they try or do cover up the not-quite-so-successful shows. A couple of spot show in New Mexico in the last month drew in the neighborhood of less than 200 fans. Needless to say that these shows didn't pay for themselves even though they were done for charities in the area. Titan had big plans for doing charity shows by putting together a special "D" team to handle fund raisers. Unfortunately, they have been a flop, pretty much across the board, so they are trying to get out of the market.

Owen Hart has returned and is still working the undercards of minor shows as the Blue Angel. Reports are that he has completely lost his workrate except for the last minute of his matches when it suddenly comes back to him. He still hasn't been on TV and I'm told it's because they are saving something special for him. Also, I would guess, they are waiting to make sure he's not going to hop off back to Calgary in the middle of a push.

PULSE ON PORTLAND
by Greg Anderson

I guess we're back to reporting on Owen Promotins exclusively until Billy Jack Haynes is back in business (if indeed he does go back into business).

On 7/23 Colonel DeBeers pinned Billy Two Eagles in a pretty good match, but kept abusing the Indian after the win. DeBeers also knocked ref Sandy Barr to the mat. Art Barr then ran in and slugged the colonel over the tp rope to start a new feud. Later, Art and CW Bergstrom were in the ring waiting for their opponents, the debuting Beach Boys. The Boy's music played for a while as they were stalling their entrance. Finally (are you ready?) out came Buddy Rose and Avalanche. The fans immediately picked up on the "Whales on the Beach" chant and of course Av and Buddy won the match. Then they demanded a match with the Southern Rockers. Promoter Don Owen who does his own ring announcing in Portland wondered if they came from Jantzen Beach which is a Portland shopping mall.

Mike Golden and the Grappler had a wild pull apart brawl which ended in a DDQ. One or the other kept breaking loose before order was restored.

Also on the card, Rose faced Scott Peterson in a singles match. Peterson had Rose in his full nelson when Avalanche ran in with Steve Dahl coming from the other side. A four way brawl was on until the faces drove the heels from the ring. Peterson is also being pushed as the number one contender for the Grappler's singles belt. On 7/30, Peterson pinned Bergstrom when Grap interfered. A slugfest ensued with Scott driving the masked man from the ring. After Peterson left, Grappler reentered and attacked Bergstrom until Peterson came back for the save.

In another match on the 30th, DeBeers faced Art Barr with Sandy as referee. DeBeers pinned Art by using the trunks. The crowd protested and Sandy reversed the decision. DeBeers then demanded an "I quit" match with a different ref.

The Beach BOYS won a non title match over Peterson and Dahl when Av clotheslined Dahl from the ring apron as Dahl pushed Rose into the ropes for a reverse cradle attempt and Rose bent over at the last minute. This allowed Rose to pin Steve and force a title shot.

Announced as coming in mid to late August is a masked man called Top Gun. I'm not sure who this guy is but it wouldn't surprise me if it turned out to be Dave the Assassin Sierra coming back under another identity and the heels protest (or will they pull a "Col. DeBeers" and pretend he's a completely different wrestler?). One thing that would be different in this angle is that the heels wouldn't be able to prove their point by unmasking him.

FLASH! Peterson won the Northwest title by pinning Grappler in 10 seconds (or so they say) on 8/5 in Eugene. Art Barr was the referee and Grap says he was pinned before the bell rang. Grap held the belt since 10/31/87 when he beat Mike Miller.

On 8/6 in Portland, the Beach Boys apparently won the tag titles when Av (who was not the legal man in thering) splashed Dahl from the top rope as Rose and Peterson brawled outside the ring and ref Sandy was trying to break them up. Barr returned to make the count. Billy Two Eagles played the informer once again to get the decision revered and the faces made it out of the ring with out being attacked. On 8/12, the teams will be rematched in a no DQ battle.

Also on the 8/5 card, DeBeers face Art Barr in the "I Quit" bout. Of course, no one said the magic word and ref Luke Brown took a bump. DeBeers then hung Art upside down in the corner and worked him over. Sandy then jumped into the ring but he was attacked as well. DeBeers was going to piledrive Sandy when Art fought him off with a chair.

The two will meet on the 8/12 show in a "First to break the rules, loses" match. Of course, DeBeers will spit on Art and Barr will punch him to lose. The 8/5 card was billed as KPTV Appriciation night. KPTV

channel 12 is the station that has carried the Portland Wrestling TV show for many years.

Golden and Madril have been feuding around the horn as each says the other is a traitor. They both turned in the last several months.

Top Gun debuts (?) on 8/20.

WORLD CLASS

Jeff Bowdren suggests this heading: World Class held hostage by Von Erich's, Day 12...

Ken Mantel, who we had thought had bought out the promotion evidently didn't buy as big of a part of it as we had thought because he got fed up with the Von Erichs and walked out. I guess he'll go back to what ever is left of Wild West or wait around until things cool down here.

Meanwhile, this all means that Kevin is in charge along with his mother Doris. That probably means that Papa Fritz isn't far behind. Wonderful.

Terry Gordy has returned after working a few dates in Alabama/Tennessee. They have dropped the scheduled feud with him and Buddy Roberts for a while, and he instead has something going with Kamala.

With the Von Erich takeover, some of the working relationships with other groups are being severed. The reason being given by the promotion is that the money they were getting from the other groups did not offset the cost of travel and salaries. The inside story is that they didn't like the way their wrestlers (mainly Kerry) was being handled outside the territory. He will still appear from time to time, but he's about the only one.

At the end of July, Dallas hosted the renegade WFIA group and was well received by everyone here. They helped to sell out the Sportatorium for a Bruiser Brody tribute card. Our congrats go out to the group and the promotion for working together so smoothly.

The new color commentator Henry Martin is making Mark Lowrance almost bearable. Mark is dreadful by himself, but when he has someone else to help, he improves to just plain bad. Henry has had a few good lines. Talking about Buddy Roberts he said that it was hard to like a guy who called his mother collect on Mother's Day. This guy might have a future (which means he'll be gone in a couple of weeks).

Buddy Roberts is coming to the ring like an Island Boy now in flowered shorts and sarongs. Funny stuff.

RESULTS FROM ALL OVER

7/30 SHREVEPORT, LA (WCCW) - courtesy of Andy Dragos...
Matt Borne drew JJFunk (C)...Jack Victory over Shaun Simpson (C)...Iceman beat Steve Casey (C)...Irwin pinned Bart (C)...Swat Team beat Kevin VE/Hayes (B)...Simpson won triple tower, Samu 2nd, 3rd was Fatu...Steve Simpson pinned John Tatum (B-)...NOTES: Attendance 2000...Hayes took the pin in the tag match...Last match in triple tower and Steve Simpson had door of top cage slammed on him...scary scene...they started at the top cage and work down.

7/30 LANDOVER, MD (NWA-BASH) - courtesy of Bill Hanrahan...
Bugsy drew Larry Z (D)...Horner pinned Steiner (C+)...Russian Assassin over Wilbur (D)...R Garvin pinned Kendall (C)...Morton/Armstrong beat Sheeps (B)...Murdoch beat Rip Morgan...Nikita over Perez (B+)...Fantastics over Midnights (A)...Doc DCOR Rotunda (B+)...Dusty/Lex/Sting Warriors won Tower of doom over Horsemen/Sullivan (A)...
NOTES: Attendance 10,000...Tower came down to Windham & Lex...Luger got out and JJ and Windham locked Ellering in cage & beat him up...Roadies made save...

8/2 LUBBOCK, TX (WCCW) - courtesy of Victor Martinez...
Borne pinned Tom Jones (D+)...Irwin beat Bart (B)...Shaun beat Victory, 10 round karate match (D-)...Kevin pinned JimmyJack (C+)...Swat Team beat Hayes/Steve Cox (B+)...Kerry over Iceman (A-)...NOTES: Attendance 825...Hayes took pin in tag match again...Kerry gave talk on drug and alcohol abuse as this was a benefit for project HOPE...he dedicated his match to Brody then did his best imitation taking match all over coliseum.

8/2 ALLENTOWN, PA (WWF) - courtesy of Randy Smith...
Taylor beat SDJones (B+)...Sharpe pinned Skaalund (F)...Patera over Sheik (D-)...Valentine defeated Muraco (D+)...
Bulldogs via DQ over Demoliton (B-)...NOTES: Attendance 1000...Jerry Allen a no show...Smash hit DK as he had Axe in abdominal stretch for DQ.

8/5 LOS ANGELES (NWA-BASH) - courtesy of Pat Crocker...
Steiner pinned Mike Starr (D+)...Murdoch over Z (F)...Garvin over Sullivan (D)...Sting by DQ over Rotundo (B-)...R Garvin pinned Riki Ataki (F)...Doc pinned Steiner (B)...Nikita over Perez (C)...Fantastics beat Midnights

(B+)...War Games: Warriors/Lex/Dusty/Ellering beat Horsemen Dillon (A)...NOTES: Attendance 4000...War Games had funny spot with JJ...hit dropkicked Lex (a good one) then got up and flexed like Lex...he tried again, missed and Lex put him in torture rack for win...Nikita-Perez to have been chain match but no chain... crowd picked up chant "Where's the Chain!"... Zbyszko and Murdoch were at worst...Sting did fantastic leap from one ring to other that had crowd pop big time...

8/6 BOSTON (WWF) - courtesy of Joe Coughlin... Bass beat Koko...Rougeaus pinned Hart Foundation ...DJ Peterson beat Lanny...HTM beat Beefy... Demolition defeated Bulldgos....Bad News beat Casey...Randy beat Ted...Andre beat Duggan...NOTES: Attendance 7500... vage beat Ted, but ending was unclear...all they said was "Here is your winner"...was to have been a no DQ match and Ted was only outside the ring for 3 seconds... Georgia (Beefy's valet) had Mine in drag as well...Rougeaus got clean pin.

8/7 GREENSBORO (WWF) - courtesy of Larry Lovell... Lanny beat Trent Knight...OMG over DJ Peterson...Taylor beat Casey...Haku pinned JYD...Powers downed Bolsheviks... Rude by COR jake...Demolition beat Bulldogs...Hogan beat Andre by DQ...NOTES: Attendance 5000...Heenan did run in for DQ in main event...

8/7 KANSAS CITY (NWA-BASH) - courtesy of Bruce Grummert... Steiner drew Z...R Garvin beat Kendall...Perez beat JR HOGG...J Garvin over Sullivan...Fantastics by DQ over Midnights...Sting by DQ over Rotundo...Doc beat Arn...Dusty/Murdoch/Lex over Flair/Tully/Barry...Warriors beat Ivan/Assassin in skywalkers...NOTES: Attendance 6800...

My thanks to everyone who sent in results that weren't used. We ran out of time to get them all in. We'll stat a new system of processing results next time and hopefully will be able to use all that we get. Keep em coming!

Also, my thanks to Bill Kunkel who did the heading for this issue's Wrestler's are People Too!

MISCELLANEOUS STUFF

We'll take care of the Trivia Question first from last issue. We asked "Who were the participants and what was the outcome of the final match ever held in the Minneapolis Auditorium?" The answer...Greg Gagne beat Curt Hennig in a cage match that had us all worried that Daddy had given Reggie the Belt. Whew, was that close! This issue's question looks at Wrestlemania II. Who was the first football player eliminated from the battle royal and who did it? Answer next time and as always, there is no prize for a correct answer, this is just for fun.

Also, left over from last issue, I promised to take a look at some of the newer bulletins on the market. Jason Powell, 205 S Wabash St. St. Paul, MN 55107 is putting out Pro Wrestling Times at a cost of just \$1.00 per issue. and it comes out every other week. Jason had not seen a copy of any other newsletter before his first attempt and so his first efforts have been impressive....Lance LeVine, 190 Grove Ave, Des Plaines, IL 60016 is doing "chokehold" which comes out once a month (I think). Price is 50¢ per issue and it contains mainly commentary. Lance has done a couple of stories for us that never got printed, just because I had a backlog of stories and by the time I got around to his, they were dated. What I'm trying to say is that he is a very talented writer with a sense of humor that is a lot like mine (that could be good OR bad...). The third one we need to cover is Harvey Cobb, of 2619 Ruffin Way, Norfolk, VA 23054 who does Pro Wrestling Enquirer at \$2.00 per issue. It comes out about monthly. It has reprints from magazines (I assume with permission) along with news and gossip plus results.

One more reader request: JOHN MCADAM, 305 Brookvillage Road, Nashua, NH 03062 has a tape list for sale that has 400 tapes on it! It cost \$3.00 which barely covers printing and postage. You should get this list, especially if you're going to participate in the FORUMBUCKS because tapes from John's list will be available. Details on that next time, meanwhile, get the list.

Joe Pezicino has had an interesting 1988 so far. His highly acclaimed Pro Wrestling This Week underwent a bunch of changes earlier due to the sale of the production company. It went from its hour format to a half hour format some time back. An hour was hardly enough time to get everything in and cutting thirty minutes off really rushed things. It also cost them a bunch of stations across the country including some major markets like Chicago because of the cut. It was almost like starting over syndication wise. But he got it back on track somehow. Then came yet another blow. WATL-TV channel 36 in Atlanta had carried a block of wrestling programs from 8pm on Saturdays till something like 3 the next morning with Joe hosting the block. They decided to drop the programs a few weeks back because they didn't like the reputation they got from carrying that much wrestling. Well, Joe has now changed TV stations and the block of wrestling is back on the air. WIEW-TV will carry the shows with this line up: 8:00-World Class; 9:00 Pro Wrestling This Week; 9:30-Memphis; 10:30-Southern Championship Wrestling; 11:30-Continental; 12:30-FLAIR (Fabulous Ladies Appearing in International Rings); 1:00 USA; 2:00-World Wrestling Council. With the recent sale of USA and the recent folding of FLAIR, it looks like Joe will need to replace an hour and a half of programming, but after seeing how he managed to switch stations and overcome all the other problems, somehow I don't think that will be a problem.

Next issue we should have our first bulletin printed on the printing press that we bought. It's due to be delivered this coming weekend

and that should do wonders for getting us back on our schedule both with this bulletin and the UAWF magazine. Speaking of the magazine, due to some technical screw ups, about nine pages had to be redone so that's taking some time. Should be out in about another week or so.

CULTURE SHOCK II: Most of you will remember the month that Sean Grande, our New York/Boston correspondent spent here one week...well, Jeff Siegel has decided he has the guts to attempt a one day stay here as well. If things go as planned, he, and a couple of Chicago readers will be down on October 1 to help make final plans for the convention. Gee, we can go see where the mummy "lived", the general store in London Mills, and maybe even get some work done!

One other bit of business before moving on...we haven't been listing the number of subscribers on the cover again...we just haven't had time to count with the deadlines. I'll try to keep you updated here in the Miscellaneous stuff section, but realize that the figure won't be completely accurate. As of Saturday the 13th, we are down to 209. This does not include the renewals from Saturday or Monday. Our high was 232 about four issues ago. Next time we'll list our prize list for the Forumbucks thing.

Also next time, we had such a good response from the Answering Machine Mania article we did (how wrestlers answer their phone via the answering machine) that we're going to do another one with reader-written stuff. I've gotten a few really good ones in and think they should be shared. If you have a contribution, let us know. As always, if you want your name withheld, let us know that as well.

One last thing...I just received Wade Keller's Mid Year Annual (he does Pro Wrestling Torch) and it is truly a masterpiece. Wade's address is Box 201844, Minneapolis, MN 55420 and the cost for the annual is \$7.50 IF he has any left. BEG him for one...it's that good.

That's all from Knoxville for another couple of weeks! See ya next time!

WRESTLING FORUM V3I15
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